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Letter dated 1 April 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the Viterbo Report: Lessons Learned in Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on Implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action, which reflects the results of a United Nations Forum on Forests country-led initiative, held in Viterbo, Italy, from 17 to 20 March 2003 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be issued as a document for the third session of the Forum in order to facilitate its work.

(*Signed*) John D. **Negroponte**

* E/CN.18/2003/1.

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Annex to the letter dated 1 April 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

UNFF COUNTRY-LED INITIATIVE

Lessons Learned in Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on Implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action

THE VITERBO REPORT

17-20 March 2003, Viterbo, Italy

Co-sponsors: Brazil, China, Italy, Japan, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, UK, USA
Supported by FAO and the UNFF Secretariat

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A. Introduction

1. This initiative on "Lessons Learned in Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on Implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action" was developed and organised by the governments of Brazil, China, Italy, Japan, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, with the support of FAO and the Secretariat of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), 17-20 March 2003 in Viterbo, Italy. The purpose of the initiative, which brought together 109 experts from 50 countries, international organizations and non-government groups, was to support UNFF's work on monitoring, assessment and reporting. (A list of participants is contained at Annex D.) This report is known as The Viterbo Report in honour of the venue and hosts of the initiative.

2. In simple terms the gathering, sharing and use of information is a fundamental requirement to demonstrate action on forests. This in turn is central to supporting the UNFF in its functions related to monitoring, assessment and reporting. The UNFF's multi-year programme of work identifies three aspects of monitoring, assessment and reporting:

- Progress in implementation of the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) 1997, and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) 2000;
- Progress towards sustainable management of all types of forests; and
- Review of the effectiveness.

3. This UNFF initiative focused on the first of these three aspects. Monitoring, assessment and reporting on implementation of the proposals for action agreed by the IPF and IFF. The purpose of these proposals as set out in the IPF mandate is to "further actions in order to combat deforestation and forest degradation and to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests." As such, it is clear that this aspect of monitoring, assessment and reporting cannot be addressed without making the links to the other two. The initiative therefore builds on the "International Expert Meeting on Monitoring Assessment and Reporting on Sustainable Forest Management" hosted by Japan, 5-8 November 2001.

4. The key objectives for the initiative were to share the lessons learned by countries from their experiences in monitoring and assessing their progress in implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action, and to identify how the UNFF can access and use national information to facilitate further implementation of the proposals.

B. Opening Ceremony

1. The University of Tuscia located in Viterbo provided the venue for the initiative in their new conference facility, the recently renovated buildings of Santa Maria in Gradi. The meeting was opened by co-chairs Paulo Vicentini of Italy's Corpo Forestale and Stephanie Caswell of the US State Department.

2. During the Opening Ceremony, Prof. Marco Mancini, Rector of the University of Tuscia, Giuseppe Di Croce, Director General of Corpo Forestale and Prof. Stefano Grego, Pro-Rector of the University of Tuscia, welcomed participants to Italy and in particular to the facilities of the University of Tuscia. They recognised the importance of the issue of monitoring, assessment and reporting in facilitating efforts by the international community to demonstrate progress on forests. Hosny El-Lakany, Assistant Director-General of the FAO Forestry Department, Pekka Patosaari, Head and Coordinator of the UNFF Secretariat, and Conceicao Ferreira, Vice Chair of the Bureau of UNFF 3 also addressed the meeting and recognised the critical nature of this issue to the UNFF and the timeliness of this initiative in informing the work of UNFF 3, which convenes in Geneva in May 2003.

C. Approach

1. In "setting the scene" for the meeting, rapporteur Mike Dudley of the UK Forestry Commission underlined the participatory nature of the meeting and its clear focus on monitoring, assessment and reporting in the context of implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action (PfAs). (The Concept Note for the meeting is contained at Annex A.) He explained that the lack of background papers was a deliberate tactic to encourage delegates to share

their experiences without any preconceived notions. The success of the initiative would depend on delegates interacting with each other to share experience and ideas on how to tackle the issue.

2. The meeting consisted of plenary sessions, panel discussions and three working groups. (The agenda is included at Annex B.) The three working groups each considered the following three questions:

1) What approaches to monitoring and implementation of the PfAs do you use and which ones are most helpful?

2) Identify best options for public, private, NGO, bilateral, regional and multilateral collaboration to build country capability and capacity to monitor and assess and report.

3) In light of your experience monitoring and assessing implementation of the PfAs:

- How could UNFF facilitate improved implementation of the PfAs through MAR?

- How can countries most effectively make information available to the UNFF?

- How can UNFF sessions be structured to capitalize on information made available by countries?

3. The final results of the informal exchange of ideas in the three working groups, which do not necessarily represent consensus among all working group members, are contained at Annex C.

4. Based on discussions in the three working groups, the meeting agreed to a clear set of 22 conclusions and 21 recommendations for action by countries and international organizations, particularly members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), to enhance monitoring, assessment and reporting on implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action, as well as ways the UNFF can facilitate international exchange and cooperation related to implementing the proposals.

D. Conclusions

The meeting agreed on the following conclusions:

1. The IPF/IFF proposals for action (PfAs) are a good reference point for national action but need to be applied to individual country conditions.

2. National forest programmes and similar country policy approaches are important frameworks for implementing PfAs.

3. Translating the PfAs into country languages, clarifying the meaning of PfAs and clustering like proposals can promote a better understanding and familiarity of the PfAs among government and non-government stakeholders involved in implementing PfAs at national and sub-national levels.

4. Communication and consultation among government and non-government stakeholders, including processes for public participation, can promote transparency, build confidence and demonstrate the value of implementing PfAs.

5. Not all PfAs are relevant to all countries. A useful first step by countries toward implementation is to analyse which proposals are relevant, which need further work and which are priorities in both the short and long term, and to identify needs. In this regard, initiatives such as "The Six Country Initiative's — Practitioner's Guide" developed under the auspices of the IFF and the "PROFOR/Australian initiative — Fostering National-Level Assessments and Action" have proved helpful.

6. In some situations, countries may find it difficult to identify priorities amongst the PfAs or to see the *implementation of the PfAs as a priority*.

7. Countries are and have been taking a range of actions to improve the sustainable management of their forests (e.g. regarding deforestation and forest degradation, forest law enforcement, reforestation,

stakeholder participation, national forest inventories, national forest programmes, protected areas, certification, market developments) and to monitor the effectiveness of those actions, but not all countries have linked their ongoing and new activities to PfAs.

8. Identifying the linkages between existing policies, programmes and actions toward sustainable forest management and PfAs, and subsequently internalising PfAs into such policies, programmes and actions, are useful steps to monitoring and assessing PfA implementation.

9. Countries are using a wide range of approaches for monitoring, assessing and reporting on implementation of PfAs. These include national forest programs and similar policy frameworks, existing systems for monitoring and assessing forest conditions and management, such as criteria and indicators, and new and innovative methods of collecting and sharing information.

10. National forest inventories and criteria and indicators are useful tools for collecting and disseminating information to stakeholders relevant to a number of PfAs.

11. Monitoring, assessing and reporting on PfA implementation through a transparent and participatory process involving all major groups is needed.

12. Countries need strengthened capacity to implement, monitor and assess PfAs, including financial and technical assistance and knowledge transfer. For example, baseline information at national and subnational levels is needed to monitor, assess and report on implementation of PfAs. The need for and usefulness of international co-operation in providing support in this area has been recognized.

13. Monitoring, assessing and reporting on PfA implementation can involve new costs and administrative burdens. Incorporating PfAs into existing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating programme and policy implementation can be useful and cost-effective. Public-private partnerships can also provide a cost-effective means of monitoring and assessing PfA implementation.

14. Collaboration and partnerships among government and non government stakeholders can be important vehicles for implementing PfAs and monitoring, assessing and reporting on their implementation, providing feed back to governments and promoting political support for action.

15. Competing interests for land use and pressure from other sectors can impact implementation of PfAs and related monitoring, assessing and reporting. Cross sectoral policy approaches can address such issues and highlight forests on national and international policy agendas for sustainable development.

16. Further streamlining and harmonization of forest-related reporting is needed by international conventions and organizations to reduce burdens, improve efficiency, reduce costs and provide more useful information. This may include cross sectoral coordination at the national level.

17. A format for reports which is simple, easily understood and conducive to information exchange is needed.

18. Greater awareness of the potential benefits to countries of reporting to the UNFF and other forest related international fora is needed.

19. In order to be useful, reporting to the UNFF needs to be organized with a view to exchanging information on what countries are doing, including progress made, lessons learned and difficulties encountered. This can facilitate international consultation, co-operation and partnerships with CPF members, as well as among regional, subregional, bilateral and other multilateral partners. This may involve written reports and or other means of communication and information exchange.

20. A flexible approach to reporting to UNFF on progress in implementing PfAs is needed to accommodate the needs, interests and perspectives of different countries and their approaches to monitoring, assessment and reporting. This could include new and innovative approaches.

21. The program of UNFF meetings needs to promote meaningful communication among countries and other stakeholders, for example through panels and side events on specific themes and other mechanisms that encourage the sharing of information.

22. The provision of additional support to enable representation by developing countries at UNFF meetings is needed.

E. Recommendations

In order to facilitate progress on monitoring, assessment and reporting on implementation of the PfAs, the meeting recommended that:

1. Countries, as needed, translate PfAs into national languages, clarify their meaning, reduce their complexity, and cluster like proposals into a form that can be understood by government and non-government stakeholders at national and sub-national levels. The previous work of "The Six Country Initiative" and the "PROFOR Australian Initiative" may be used for clustering.

2. Countries undertake an initial PfA assessment process to determine which proposals are relevant to a country and which of these should be addressed as priorities through national forest programmes or similar country policy approaches.

3. Countries use and further develop existing processes, such as national forest programs, criteria and indicators or other policy and planning frameworks, to monitor, assess and report on implementation of PfAs in a transparent, participatory and coordinated way.

4. Countries build further linkages between their efforts to monitor, assess and report on implementation of the PfAs and their work on criteria and indicators or similar approaches to assess trends in forest conditions and management.

5. Countries develop and strengthen innovative and cost effective ways to engage government and non-government stakeholders in collaborative efforts and partnerships to help monitor, assess and report on implementation of PfAs, provide feed back on actions taken and promote political support for actions.

6. CPF members, other international organisations, regional institutions and processes, and bilateral partners should support through the provision of financial resources, technical assistance and transfer of appropriate technology and know how, actions to strengthen national capacity and capability for monitoring, assessing and reporting on the implementation of PfAs.

7. Countries seek domestic and external resources, including through new and additional resources and the reallocation of existing resources, to strengthen capacity to monitor, assess and report on the implementation of PfAs.

8. UNFF should facilitate communication and collaboration between countries and CPF members, regional and subregional organisations, other multilateral partners and bilateral partners, with a view to supporting capacity building to monitor, assess and report on the implementation of PfAs.

9. Countries use regional and sub-regional organizations, processes and networks, such as FAO regional forestry commissions, to discuss common problems and share experiences and expertise regarding monitoring, assessment and reporting on implementation of PfAs.

10. Countries and CPF members create or enhance awareness by government and non-government stakeholders of the benefits of information exchange, including reporting, on PfA implementation at national and international levels, particularly as related to UNFF.

11. CPF continue its work on streamlining and harmonizing forest related reporting to international fora to reduce burdens on countries, improve efficiency, reduce costs and provide more useful information.

12. UNFF give a high priority to its work on monitoring, assessment and reporting, which has an important role to play in demonstrating progress by countries and identifying challenges and needs.

13. UNFF adopt a practical approach to reporting, including a format for written reports which is oriented towards highlighting country approaches and processes, achievements, difficulties overcome, priorities, needs and challenges with respect to implementation of PfAs. The format should be simple, easily understood, flexible and conducive to compilation, analysis and information exchange.

14. UNFF improve the multi-stakeholder dialogue as an integrated element of its sessions to provide the opportunity for a meaningful exchange of views and information.

15. UNFF facilitate meaningful communication amongst participants through integrating into the main sessions, panels and "side events" on specific themes and other mechanisms that encourage the sharing of information. The UNFF should also encourage countries, international and regional bodies, including issue based organisations such as low forest cover countries (LFCCs), and stakeholder groups to organise intersessional events and activities on relevant topics, and facilitate appropriate support for such events and activities.

16. Countries be encouraged to submit reports in a timely manner consistent with a timetable to be drawn up by the UNFF.

17. UNFF at its third session identify the benefits and value to countries of reporting on their efforts to implement the PfAs.

18. UNFF-CPF establish an internet based clearinghouse mechanism to facilitate access by countries to information and approaches related to monitoring, assessment and reporting on implementation of PfAs.

19. UNFF establish at its third session the ad hoc Expert Group on Approaches and Mechanisms for Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting[1] and include in its mandate the collection of existing country experiences on monitoring, assessment and reporting on PfA implementation and formulation of recommendations on reporting guidelines for use by countries.

20. UNFF also establish at its third session the ad hoc Expert Group on Finance and Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies[1] and include in its mandate the identification of needs for and sources of financial and technical support for monitoring, assessing and reporting on implementation of the PfAs.

21. Countries, international and regional organisations, and stakeholders continue their work on monitoring, assessment and reporting related to the implementation of the PfAs.

[1] Para 23 Multi-year programme of Work, Report on the United Nations Forum on Forests first session 11-22 June 2001.

ANNEX A

CONCEPT NOTE

Summary

This initiative has been developed and organised by the governments of Brazil, China, Italy, Japan, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, with the support of FAO and the UNFF Secretariat, in support of the UNFF to consider the monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. The initiative aims to identify ways in which the effective collection and exchange of information on implementation can lead to an expansion of implementation activity. It will provide an opportunity for people, governments and organisations engaged in the collection and exchange of information on implementation to come together, share their experiences and identify innovative ways in which we can capitalise and build on what has already been learned. The key output will be a report for transmission to the third session of the UNFF for consideration under the agenda item on monitoring, assessment and reporting.

Introduction

In simple terms the gathering, sharing and use of information is a fundamental requirement to demonstrate action on forests. This in turn is central to supporting the UNFF in its functions related to monitoring, assessment, and reporting. The UNFF has made a number of decisions related to monitoring, assessment and reporting. The UNFF's Multi-Year Programme of Work identifies three aspects of monitoring assessment and reporting:

- progress in implementation of the proposals for action of the IPF/IFF;
- progress towards sustainable management of all types of forests; and
- review of the effectiveness.

This initiative will focus on the first of these three aspects. However it is clear that one aspect cannot be addressed without making the links to the other two. In November 2001, Japan hosted and co-sponsored, along with Australia, Brazil, Ghana, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Norway and the United States, a country-led initiative primarily focused on "progress towards sustainable management of all types of forests." There is now an opportunity to build on the progress made through that initiative by focusing on "progress in implementation of the proposals for action of the IPF/IFF."

Objectives

The key objectives for this initiative are to share the lessons learned by countries from their experiences in monitoring and assessing their own progress in implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action, and through thoughtful discussion identify how the UNFF can access and use national information to facilitate further implementation of the proposals for action.

Approach

Only through sharing experiences can we get a better understanding of the variety of approaches countries have taken to meet their specific needs for monitoring, assessment and reporting and, through this, develop suitable approaches for sharing information at the global level.

Linked to these objectives (and a key element in the development of this initiative from the outset) has been recognition of the importance of active involvement by participants. For that reason the bulk of the agenda for this Initiative is given over to working group sessions with the emphasis on working.

To help orientate participants, the Initiative will commence with a plenary session of presentations by a panel of countries and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). The panellists will recount their experiences related to countries' efforts to monitor and assess the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action. The presentations will focus specifically on proposals for action related to a certain UNFF element (i.e. combating deforestation and forest degradation) in order to give concrete examples of approaches to monitoring and assessment. These will serve as examples to encourage panellists and participants to begin exploring key issues.

The Initiative will then break into three working groups to consider a range of questions such as:

- What approaches to monitoring implementation of the Proposals for Action do you use and which ones are most helpful?
- Identify the best options for broad collaboration to build country's capability and capacity to monitor, assess and report.
- In light of your experience, how could UNFF facilitate improved implementation of the proposals for action through monitoring, assessment and reporting?
- How can countries most effectively make information available to UNFF? How can UNFF Sessions be structured to capitalise on information made available by countries?

Regular short plenary sessions will allow reporting back and promote cross- fertilization between the groups. Finally, the groups' findings will be drawn together in plenary and captured in a report of the Initiative.

Actors

Participants have been invited from countries around the world and representing a wide range of interests. The Initiative is scheduled for the week following the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO) meeting in Rome, with the idea that this will facilitate the participation of senior officials and national experts involved in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

In recognition that forest information is collected, analysed, and disseminated by a wide range of organizations, and to ensure a broad perspective, representatives of non-governmental organizations, private sector entities and other stakeholders are also being invited.

Members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other international organizations with an interest in forests will be key participants.

Outputs

The formal output will be a report, which will be submitted to the third session of the UNFF.

It is also anticipated that through sharing experiences participants will take away valuable lessons they can apply in light of their own circumstances.

Links

The issue of reporting on forests and the question of duplication has been raised in a number of international fora and with a range of international bodies. The output of this Initiative, and the approaches identified, should also be of value in considering how to co-ordinate the collection of relevant information. In light of this the organisers have scheduled an informal evening session for a CPF Panel, when CPF members can describe what they are doing in this field and seek feedback from participants.

Conclusions

This Initiative provides an excellent opportunity to take the next steps in assessing how we can most effectively gather and use information to fulfil one of the UNFF's principal functions: "to monitor and assess progress at the national, regional and global levels," and to promote progress towards implementation of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action.

ANNEX B

MEETING AGENDA

Saturday, March 15

1200-1400 **Conference Registration** at Balletti Palace hotel

Sunday, March 16

1530-2200 **Conference Registration** at Balletti Palace Hotel

1900-2030 **Welcome Reception** at "La Zaffera" hosted by Mayor of Viterbo, Giancarlo Gabbianelli

Monday, March 17

0800-1000 **Registration** at conference site, Santa Maria in Gradi

1000-1115 **Opening Ceremony:** Stephanie Caswell and Paolo Vicentini, Co-Chairs

Welcoming Remarks by:

Prof. Marco Mancini, Rector, University of Tuscia
Giuseppe Di Croce, Director General, Corpo Forestale, Italy
Prof. Stefano Grego, Pro-Rector, University of Tuscia
Hosny El-Lakany, Assistant Director-General for Forestry, FAO
Pekka Patosaari, Head and Coordinator, UNFF Secretariat
Conceicao Ferreira, Vice Chair UNFF

1115- 1130 **Coffee Break** — Press Access

1130-1150 **Scene Setting Presentation:** Mike Dudley, UK, Rapporteur

1150-1300 **Plenary Panel Discussion:** Country/FAO experiences with monitoring and assessing implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action in relation to combating deforestation and forest degradation

Panellists: Tasso Resende de Azevedo, Deputy Director, Forestry Department, Ministry of the Environment, Brazil
Linda Hedlund, Head of Forest Policy, Ministry of Industry, Sweden
Tamer Otrakcier, Head of Research, Planning and Coordination, General Directorate of Forestry, Turkey
Peter Holmgren, Chief Forest Resources Management, FAO

1300-1430 **Lunch** at conference site sponsored by Italian Ministry of Agriculture and Forests

1430-1700 **Working Groups I, II, III: Question 1** (see annex)

Working Group I (English)

Chair — Peter Csoka, Hungary; Rapporteur — Linda Hedlund, Sweden.

Working Group II (English)

Chair — Linda Mossop, South Africa; Rapporteur — Ed Brown, USA

Working Group III (English, French, Spanish)

Chair — Jan McAlpine, USA; Rapporteur — Mike Fullerton, Canada

1700-1715 **Coffee break**

1715-1800 **Plenary**: **Reports from Working Groups on Question 1**

1900-2030 **Informal Panel Session** - *Balletti Palace Hotel*

Stakeholder experiences with monitoring and assessing implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action related to combating deforestation and forest degradation

Moderator: Yuji Imaizumi, Japan

Panellists: Ewald Rametsteiner, MCPFE
Marvin Brown, American Forest & Paper Association
Tom Griffiths, Forest Peoples Programme
Andrei Laletin, Friends of Siberian Forests

Tuesday March 18

0900-1030 **Working Groups I, II, III**: **Question 2** (See Annex)

1030-1100 **Coffee break**

1100-1145 **Question 2** - Continued

1145-1230 **Plenary**: **Reports from Working Groups on Question 2**

1230-1400 **Lunch** sponsored by Italian Ministry of Agriculture and Forests

1400-1700 **Working Groups I, II, III**: **Question 3** (See Annex)

1715-1900 **Informal session *at conference site*** - Presentation by members of CPF Task Force on Streamlining Forest-Related Reporting

Moderator: Xia Jun, China

Presenters:

Michael Martin, Director, Forest Policy and Planning, FAO
Eva Mueller, Assistant Director for Reforestation & Forest Management, ITTO
Susan Braatz, Senior Policy Advisor, UNFF Secretariat
Stefan Hain, Senior Program Officer, UNEP-WCMC
Peter Holmgren, Chief Forest Resources Management, FAO

Wednesday March 19

0900-1000 **Working Groups I, II, III: Question 3** - Continued

1000-1030 **Coffee break**

1030-1200 **Working Groups I, II, III:** Review of conclusions and recommendations, Questions 1, 2, 3

1200-1300 **Plenary:** Presentation of Conclusions and Recommendations from Working Groups I, II, III

1400-1600 **Lunch** sponsored by Viterbo Chamber of Commerce at Villa Tedeschi

1630-1830 Guided tour of Viterbo starting from Villa Tedeschi (optional) or return to hotels

2030 **Gala dinner** hosted by Giulio Marini, President of Viterbo Province

Thursday March 20

0830	**Field trip to Monti Cimini Forest** organized by Corpo Forestale
	Buffet lunch provided. Hiking shoes, cold-weather clothing suggested.
	(Buses depart from Balletti and Nibbio Hotels)
AM	*Drafting Group working session*
1400-1700	**Plenary:** Consideration and adoption of final Conclusions and Recommendations
1700-1730	**Closing Ceremony** - Remarks by Prof. Grego, Pro-Rector, University of Tuscia

* * * * *

ANNEX TO THE AGENDA

Working Groups I, II, III should consider the following questions:

1. What approaches to monitoring and implementation of the PFAs do you use and which ones are most helpful?

2. Identify best options for public, private, NGO, bilateral, regional and multilateral collaboration to build country capability and capacity to monitor, assess and report. *(Note: This should be more than just a 'wish list.')*

3. In light of your experience monitoring and assessing implementation of the PFAs:

   - How could UNFF facilitate improved implementation of the PFAs through MAR?

   - How can countries most effectively make information available to the UNFF?

   - How can UNFF sessions be structured to capitalize on information made available by countries?

In considering these three questions, Working Groups should identify ways in which more effective collection and exchange of information can:

- Attract more resources for monitoring, assessment and implementation of PFAs

- Better identify progress made

- Lead to replication of that progress

- Expand and improve implementation of the PFAs

ANNEX C

INFORMAL FINAL RESULTS OF WORKING GROUPS I, II and III ON QUESTIONS 1-3

WORKING GROUP I — RECOMMENDATIONS

- *The group considered the importance of facilitating the integration of PfAs into nfps, national biodiversity strategies and other forest-related plans and programmes. Facilitating participation of all major groups as defined in Agenda 21 in the assessment of the relevance of the PfAs, their implementation and the monitoring, assessment, and reporting of progress in their implementation was also considered.*
- To move forward with these objectives, countries should make available the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action (PfAs) in a form that can be understood by actors at national and sub-national levels.

Question 2

- Countries should develop innovative and cost-effective ways to engage major groups in collaborative/cross-sectoral partnerships to increase capability and capacity to monitor, assess, and report on implementation of the PfAs.
- CPF members, other international organisations, and regional institutions and processes should support efforts to strengthen national capacity and capability for monitoring, assessment and reporting.

Question 3

- Work on MAR has to continue throughout the UNFF process, and it must be given high priority.
- CPF members are invited to assist countries in reducing their reporting burden.
- UNFF Secretariat should use reports and information received and highlight examples of use of reported information, and disseminate information on methods for monitoring and reporting. The information provided in reports should be used by UNFF to identify actions to support countries in their efforts to implement PfAs.
- The multi-stakeholder dialogue has to be improved to provide options for a real exchange of views.

WORKING GROUP 2 — CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that, in implementing and monitoring, assessing and reporting on the PFAs, member countries consider:

a. Embarking on an initial assessment process of the PFAs themselves, to decide which PFAs are the most relevant to the member country, considering the resources of the member country, (human, financial, technical, technological), which PFAs should be addressed in the short, medium or long term, and how an inclusive process, involving relevant stakeholders, can be carried out.

b. Designing the implementation plan for the PFAs considered most relevant, through an inclusive process involving as many relevant stakeholders as possible.

c. Monitoring the implementation of the PFAS through the assistance of NGOs, Special Interest Groups, Certification bodies, communities, and independent third parties (scientists, researchers, committees set up for this purpose etc.).

d. Developing, improving, and using internal systems within their national forest programs, or similar processes, including reporting requirements for forest-related MEAs, for effective information collection, monitoring, and assessment, to be used in the formulation of their reports to UNFF.

e. Building further linkages between the MAR on implementation of IPF/IFF PFAs and on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

f. Developing the means to effectively assess the information gathered through the monitoring process.

g. The need for rationalisation of information gathered, in accordance with the approach of the CPF task Force on Stream-lining Forest Related Reporting.

2. It is recommended that existing regional and subregional structures incorporate or institute agenda items, or convene workshops, to share expertise regarding the MAR process, to ensure meaningful reporting on the implementation of the PfAs.

3. It is recommended that NFP processes and similar policy processes, which include the participation of the private sector, NGOs, communities and other stakeholders, be used throughout the MAR process.

4. It is recommended that member countries should endeavour to ensure that reports to the UNFF are submitted in time, according to the timetable recommended to be drawn up by the UNFF secretariat, and include descriptions of successes as well as areas upon which assistance or guidance would be welcomed.

5. It is recommended that it be recognised that some countries require assistance in evaluating the PFAs and thereafter to implement, monitor, assess and report on them, and that therefore financial and other resources are needed to assist some member countries in this process. This could be provided in a number of ways including reallocation of internal resources and/or external assistance.

6. It is recommended that the UNFF facilitate the provision of technical and other assistance to member countries needing such assistance to:

a. attend pertinent international fora or meetings

b. design and implement a national reporting process, which will allow prompt and meaningful reporting to the UNFF, which should be inclusive of stakeholders

c. assess relevant national information in order to submit meaningful reports to the UNFF

7. It is recommended that as "side events" provide a valuable opportunity to exchange information and to learn from others, these events should not be marginalised as a peripheral activity, but should rather be seen as an integral part of UNFF sessions, and be reflected on the agenda. Discussions during UNFF sessions should be more interactive and perhaps be based on the format utilised in the March 2003 COFO meeting. UNFF should consider different locations for UNFF sessions.

8. It is recommended that the UNFF secretariat:

a. Assist countries, regional bodies, issue-based organizations, NGOs and other stakeholder groups to organise intersessional work and events formerly seen as side events, including field trips at UNFF sessions.

b. Assist member countries by disseminating information received to other member countries more effectively.

c. Assist member countries, through the provision of a flexible format for reporting and opportunities for dialogue, containing information on approaches and processes of implementation and the progress made, based on existing agreement on what is needed, and taking into consideration existing reporting systems or processes. CPF should have a role here.

d. Construct and disseminate to all member countries a schedule of reporting deadlines and suggested planning periods, designed to allow for a realistic time period for the collection of information, significant consultation period with relevant stakeholders and effective compilation and analysis of reports, within countries.

e. Analyze the reports received prior to UNFF sessions, in order that significant trends and issues can be discussed at UNFF sessions.

f. Distil from reports received, lessons learnt or best practice guidelines, disseminate these widely to member countries, and utilize these results as a basis for discussion at UNFF sessions, especially with regard to implementation of the PFAs.

g. Analyze the achievements and progress made in implementation of the IPF/IFF PFAs and utilize this analysis as a basis for discussion at UNFF sessions.

h. Draw up a document specifying clearly the rationale for requesting information, to encourage member countries to report.

i. Draw up a document explaining the purpose and format of reporting to encourage stakeholder participation in the MAR process, especially at local or community level.

WORKING GROUP III — TOPICS AND ELEMENTS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNFF, CPF AND MEMBER COUNTRIES

Streamlining

- -- utilize existing work to simplify and reduce the complexity of the proposals, make it available to UNFF members;
- -- recommend that UNFF/CPF establish a clearinghouse mechanism for use by countries on reporting and sources of information;
- -- establish an integrated and cross-sectoral approach to national and international monitoring, assessment and implementation assessment in reporting;
- -- simple reporting;
- -- request CPF to increase its work in streamlining forest reporting, including exploring the potential of streamlining C&I processes;

MAR should Focus on Implementation

- -- recommend that the ad hoc UNFF Expert Group on MAR include in its task the collection of existing country and organization experiences, related reports and recommend guidelines and key points to facilitate implementation;
- -- apply appropriate structures and formats for assessment, monitoring and reporting to facilitate implementation;
- -- structures and formats should be oriented towards successes, priorities or gaps and challenges;
- -- recommend the value of NFP's to foster and assess implementation;

Participatory Approach to MAR

- -- develop or adapt multistakeholder processes or approaches for undertaking MAR in order to stress the need for stakeholders to participate in MAR;
- -- develop/support a co-ordination and participatory framework at the national level, including among focal points for all forest-related processes;
- -- catalog the actions taken by countries to expand their participation in the implementation of the PFA, including in their successes and challenges;
- -- UNFF members should encourage and facilitate the participation of private sector, NGOs and other civil society in MAR;

-- recommend that UNFF/CPF the allocation of adequate resources to cover the transaction costs of multistakeholder participation in MAR, particularly at the National level;

Information and Capacity Building

-- expand/establish/create awareness of the benefits of reporting, including its contribution to advancing SFM, including through workshops and meetings;

-- meaning of the PFA themselves;

-- utilize country reports to identify priority issues requiring financial and technical assistance;

-- coordinate and facilitate access to technical and financial assistance for countries;

-- translate PFA into national languages and communicate content;

-- strengthen regional processes with a view to strengthen their capacity to collect ideas, organize discussions, discuss common problems shared by countries, in order that these processes can be preparatory steps for forest-related meetings.

Institutional Structure

-- Encourage the use of existing regional and sub regional processes, including regional commissions to further MAR;

-- UNFF should request that the Secretariat identify as a matter of priority, focus its preparation of meetings and its development of guidance materials in order to facilitate country sharing of implementation assessment and reporting information on MAR;

-- UNFF sessions should have segments for discussing lessons learned and analysis of policy and practical examples, these segments should involve experts.

ANNEX D

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

COUNTRIES

Experts from the following countries participated:

Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Columbia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Finland, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Madagascar, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Senegal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States of America and Venezuela.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The following international organizations were represented:

DESA/UNFF Secretariat, FAO, ITTO, IUCN-World Conservation Union, Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, and UNEP.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Non-governmental organizations represented were:

American Forest & Paper Association, Forests Monitor, Forests People Programme, Friends of Siberian Forests, International Council of Forest Product Association, International Institute for Sustainable Development and Pinchot Institute Association.

Participants details can be found in The Viterbo Report as published on the UNFF and FAO web sites.